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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 001622

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SUBJECT: REFUGEE AND TRANSIT CAMPS IN JORDAN NEARLY READY
FOR OPERATIONS

Classified By: A/DCM Doug Silliman, per 1.5 (b) and (d).

1. (U) This is a joint Embassy/DART message.

2. (U) UNHCR REFUGEE CAMP: As of mid-day (local time) on March 18, GOJ workers were laying water/sanitation infrastructure -- water tanks, latrine pits, a trench system and cesspools. UNHCR has not yet received authorization from the GOJ to erect rubhalls and tents. Once authorization is given, UNHCR will set up tents for 5,000 refugees (1,000 tents) and will have the ability to expand the camp site in modular increments of 5,000 persons, up to a total of 20,000 persons. UNHCR has moved non-food items for 10,000 refugees to warehouse near Ruweished and has deployed a team of five staff to Ruweished (identified on USG maps as Ruwayshid or H-4), including its senior logistics officer, national protection officer and security officer. It will share office space with the Hashemite Charitable Organization, designated by the GOJ to serve as host-country coordinator for refugee issues. UNHCR has identified the following NGO implementing partners: OXFAM for water; Middle East Council of Churches for sanitation; and Japan Platform for medical care. WFP will provide food.

3. (U) IOM/JRCS TRANSIT CAMP FOR TCNS: As of March 13, key infrastructure for the transit camp -- one 17,000 liter water tank, rows of latrine toilets, a trench system and cesspools -- was in place. Late on March 17, the GOJ gave the Jordan Red Crescent Society (JRCS) authorization to erect a rubhall and 1,000 tents; JRCS is doing so today, March 18. The International Federation of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies has provided non-food items for 5,000 TCNs. Although the JRCS had identified the Jordanian Evangelical Committee for Relief and Development as its implementing partner for food services, neither has funds available to actually purchase food. According to IOM, the transit camp's water needs will be supplied by the GOJ's Ministry of Water, but IOM will have to pay for the water and its transportation (see para 4). GOJ officials, however, told embosffs March 13 that water for the transit camp would be supplied from a well approximately 3 km to the east of the transit camp. IOM has established an office in Ruweished that is fully connected to IOM offices throughout the region, and will have five staff in place there on the morning of March 19. IOM will also establish a two-person office in Aqaba on March 19, to facilitate onward transportation of Egyptian and Sudanese nations. (Refcoord/DART funding recommendation: Because the needs and supposed funding arrangements identified by the GOJ and JRCS keep shifting, we recommend that all funds for camp management services -- including food and water -- continue to be directed toward IOM. As the overall lead agency for TCN issues, IOM is better positioned to identify and respond to emerging needs, and our funding would therefore have the greatest flexibility if implemented through IOM.)

4. (U) WATER: UNHCR and IOM report that water for both camps will be supplied by the GOJ's Ministry of Water, from the well dug near Ruweished and treated by the US-funded reverse osmosis purification unit. IOM will be required to purchase the water at a cost of USD 6.5 per cubic meter. IOM will also need to pay separately for transport of water from the well (located near the refugee camp) to the transit camp, a distance of approximately seven km. JRCS will distribute water within the TCN transit camp. UNHCR is still negotiating its water arrangements with the GOJ but has made arrangements with OXFAM to distribute water within the refugee camp.

5. (C) ACCESS TO EASTERN JORDAN: The biggest remaining obstacle is access to all points east of Safawiye for UNHCR and IOM's NGO implementing partners. The GOJ most likely will close this entire area at the onset of hostilities in Iraq. The GOJ has informed IOM that permission has been granted for its staff and vehicles to travel to Ruweished but that documentation will be issued at a later date, presumably the onset of hostilities. UNHCR's documentation will be arranged through the Hashemite Charitable Organization. Yet none of IOM or UNHCR's NGO implementing partners yet have the appropriate authorization to travel to eastern Jordan -- a bureaucratic obstacle that could potentially slow down relief efforts. We will continue to work with the GOJ to ensure that an appropriate system is established to grant permits to

NGOs to access eastern Jordan.

16. (C) We also note that JAF officials have repeatedly stated that authorization for IOs and NGOs to move in the closed military area will be point-to-point only, e.g., for organizations to travel to a specific camp or to the border. Relief organizations will not be allowed to deviate from their plans and travel to a different destination once they have been granted access to the military area. Because two different sets of relief agencies will be working in the two different camps, we do not anticipate any problems in this "point-to-point" access system.

GNEHM